

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-7 (cancelled)

8. (currently amended): An adjustable-length pole, the pole comprising:
- at least one outer tube;
 - an inner tube structured and dimensioned for insertion into the outer tube in a telescoping fashion for adjusting a length of the pole;
 - a limit stop disposed at an end of the inner tube;
 - an adjusting screw being axially oriented within the outer tube, non-rotatable with respect to the inner tube and supported in a fixed manner on the end of the inner tube;
 - a limit stop disposed on a free end of the adjusting screw;
 - a radially spreadable element with a non-threaded bore and with only one single inner cone, the inner cone opening towards the end of the inner tube, wherein the radially spreadable element is disposed with its axial length between the limit stop disposed at the end of the inner tube and the limit stop disposed on the free end of the adjusting screw, and wherein the distance between the limit stops is larger than the axial length of the radially spreadable element by a gap distance, such that the radially spreadable element is moveable axially within the distance between the limit stops, including the gap distance, without rotation thereof; and
 - an interior element having an internal threaded bore and an outer cone tapering towards the free end of the adjusting screw and being structured, dimensioned, and disposed for cooperation with the inner cone of the radially spreadable element, wherein the interior element is screwed onto the adjusting screw and is axially movable with respect to the inner tube by rotation thereof via the internal threaded bore,
- wherein the radially spreadable element and the interior element cooperate to form a spreading device supported ~~at~~ axially at the end of the inner tube, the spreading device for clamping the inner tube within the outer tube.

9. (previously presented): The pole of claim 8, wherein the pole is a ski or a walking stick.

10. (currently amended): An adjustable-length pole, the pole comprising:
at least one outer tube;
an inner tube structured and dimensioned for insertion into the outer tube in a telescoping fashion for adjusting a length of the pole;
a limit stop disposed at an end of the inner tube;
an adjusting screw axially oriented within the outer tube, non-rotatable with respect to the inner tube and supported in a fixed manner on the end of the inner tube;
a limit stop disposed on a free end of the adjusting screw;
a radially spreadable element with a non-threaded bore and with only one single inner cone, the inner cone opening towards the end of the inner tube, wherein the radially spreadable element is disposed with its axial length between the limit stop disposed at the end of the inner tube and the limit stop disposed on the free end of the adjusting screw, and wherein the distance between the limit stops is larger than the axial length of the radially spreadable element by a gap distance, such that the radially spreadable element is moveable axially within the distance between the limit stops, including the gap distance, without rotation thereof; and

an interior element having an internal threaded bore and an outer cone tapering towards the free end of the adjusting screw and being structured, dimensioned, and disposed for cooperation with the inner cone of the radially spreadable element, in that by rotating the inner tube with respect to the outer tube the interior element is moved away from the inner tube and into the radially spreadable element spreading it the radially spreadable element apart radially against the interior circumference of the outer tube, wherein the interior element is screwed onto the adjusting screw and is axially moveable with respect to the inner tube by rotation thereof via the internal threaded bore,

wherein the radially spreadable element and the interior element cooperate to form a spreading device supported at axially at the end of the inner tube, the spreading device for clamping the inner tube within the outer tube, and

wherein the radially spreadable element is configured as a pot having a base that is penetrated by a free end area of the adjusting screw, facing away from the inner tube.

11. (previously presented): The adjustable-length pole of claim 8, wherein the radially spreadable element comprises a cylindrical shoulder having a smaller exterior diameter than a base of the radially spreadable element, and facing the inner tube, said shoulder being axially guidable by a guide piece attached to a limit stop surface at the end of the inner tube facing the radially spreadable element.

12. (previously presented): The adjustable-length pole of claim 8, wherein the limit stop disposed on the free end of the adjusting screw is a cap that is axially secured at the free end of the adjusting screw after the radially spreadable element has been set in place.

13. (withdrawn - previously presented): The adjustable-length pole of claim 8, wherein the limit stop disposed on the free end of the adjusting screw is formed by a head that is molded onto the free end of the adjusting screw, with the radially spreadable element having a peripheral slot that extends along an entire axial length of the radially spreadable element.

14. (withdrawn - previously presented): The adjustable-length pole of claim 11, wherein the spreading device has a plug that accommodates the adjusting screw in an axial and rotationally fixed manner, said plug being supported axially and in a rotationally fixed manner in the inner tube and defining the limit stop disposed at an end of the inner tube, said plug having an axially protruding guide member cooperating with said cylindrical shoulder of the radially spreadable element.

15. (currently amended): An adjustable-length pole, the pole comprising:
at least one outer tube;
an inner tube structured and dimensioned for insertion into the outer tube in a telescoping fashion for adjusting a length of the pole;
a limit stop disposed at an end of the inner tube;
an adjusting screw being axially oriented within the outer tube, non-rotatable with respect to the inner tube and supported in a fixed manner on the end of the inner tube;
a limit stop disposed on a free end of the adjusting screw;

a radially spreadable element with a non-threaded bore and with only one single inner cone, the inner cone opening towards the end of the inner tube, wherein the radially spreadable element is disposed with its axial length between the limit stop disposed at the end of the inner tube and the limit stop disposed on the free end of the adjusting screw, and wherein the distance between the limit stops is larger than the axial length of the radially spreadable element by a gap distance, such that the radially spreadable element is moveable axially within the distance between the limit stops, including the gap distance without rotation thereof; and

an interior element having an internal threaded bore and an outer cone tapering towards the free end of the adjusting screw and being structured, dimensioned, and disposed for cooperation with the inner cone of the radially spreadable element, wherein the interior element is screwed onto the adjusting screw and is axially movable with respect to the inner tube by rotation thereof via the internal threaded bore,

wherein the radially spreadable element and the interior element cooperate to form a spreading device supported ~~at~~ axially at the end of the inner tube, the spreading device for clamping the inner tube within the outer tube, and,

wherein said interior element has a plurality of radially protruding fins, each of which is guided in an axial slot of the radially spreadable element for axial movement thereof.

16. (currently amended): An adjustable-length pole, the pole comprising:

at least one outer tube;

an inner tube structured and dimensioned for insertion into the outer tube in a telescoping fashion for adjusting a length of the pole;

a limit stop disposed at an end of the inner tube;

an adjusting screw being axially oriented within the outer tube, non-rotatable with respect to the inner tube and supported in a fixed manner on the end of the inner tube;

a limit stop disposed on a free end of the adjusting screw;

a radially spreadable element with a non-threaded bore and with only one single inner cone, the inner cone opening towards the end of the inner tube, wherein the radially spreadable element is disposed with its axial length between the limit stop disposed at the end of the inner tube and the limit stop disposed on the free end of the adjusting screw, and wherein the distance

between the limit stops is larger than the axial length of the radially spreadable element by a gap distance, such that the radially spreadable element is moveable axially within the distance between the limit stops, including the gap distance without rotation thereof; and

an interior element having an internal threaded bore and an outer cone tapering towards the free end of the adjusting screw and being structured, dimensioned, and disposed for cooperation with the inner cone of the radially spreadable element, wherein the interior element is screwed onto the adjusting screw and is axially movable with respect to the inner tube by rotation thereof via the internal threaded bore,

wherein the radially spreadable element and the interior element cooperate to form a spreading device supported at axially at the end of the inner tube, the spreading device for clamping the inner tube within the outer tube,

wherein the radially spreadable element is configured as a pot having a base the is penetrated by a free end area of the adjusting screw, facing away from the inner tube, and

wherein said interior element has a plurality of radially protruding fins, each of which is guided in an axial slot of the radially spreadable element.

17. (previously presented): An adjustable-length pole, the pole comprising:

at least one outer tube;

an inner tube structured and dimensioned for insertion into the outer tube in a telescoping fashion for adjusting a length of the pole;

a limit stop disposed at an end of the inner tube;

an adjusting screw being axially oriented within the outer tube, non-rotatable with respect to the inner tube and supported in a fixed manner on the end of the inner tube;

a limit stop disposed on a free end of the adjusting screw;

a radially spreadable element with a non-threaded bore and with only one single inner cone, the inner cone opening towards the end of the inner tube, wherein the radially spreadable element is disposed with its axial length between the limit stop disposed at the end of the inner tube and the limit stop disposed on the free end of the adjusting screw, and wherein the distance between the limit stops is larger than the axial length of the radially spreadable element by a gap distance, such that the radially spreadable element is moveable axially within the distance between the limit stops, including the gap distance, without rotation thereof; and

an interior element having an internal threaded bore and an outer cone tapering towards the free end of the adjusting screw and being structured, dimensioned, and disposed for cooperation with the inner cone of the radially spreadable element, in that by rotating said inner tube with respect to said outer tube said interior element is axially moved away from said inner tube and into engagement with said spreading element spreading the element apart radially against the interior circumference of the outer tube,

wherein the radially spreadable element and the interior element cooperate to form a spreading device supported at axially the end of the inner tube, the spreading device for clamping the inner tube within the outer tube.

18. (cancelled)

19. (currently amended): An adjustable-length pole, the pole comprising:

at least one outer tube;

an inner tube structured and dimensioned for insertion into the outer tube in a telescoping fashion for adjusting a length of the pole;

a limit stop disposed at an end of the inner tube;

an adjusting screw being axially oriented within the outer tube, non-rotatable with respect to the inner tube and supported in a fixed manner on the end of the inner tube;

a limit stop disposed on a free end of the adjusting screw;

a radially spreadable element with a non-threaded bore and with only one single inner cone, the inner cone opening from an apex towards the end of the inner tube, wherein the radially spreadable element is furnished on an exterior periphery with four notches which are all axially and centrally symmetrical to each other and which run in a longitudinal direction, wherein the radially spreadable element is disposed with its axial length between the limit stop disposed at the end of the inner tube and the limit stop disposed on the free end of the adjusting screw, and wherein the distance between the limit stops is larger than the axial length of the radially spreadable element by a gap distance, such that the radially spreadable element is moveable axially within the distance between the limit stops, including the gap distance, without rotation thereof; and

an interior element having an internal threaded bore and an outer cone tapering to an apex

towards the free end of the adjusting screw and being structured, dimensioned, and disposed for cooperation with the inner cone of the radially spreadable element, wherein the interior element is screwed onto the adjusting screw and is axially moveable with respect to the ~~inert~~ inner tube by rotation thereof via the internal threaded bore,

wherein the radially spreadable element and the interior element cooperate to form a spreading device supported at axially at the end of the inner tube, the spreading device for clamping the inner tube within the outer tube.

20. (new): The adjustable-length pole as recited in claim 15, wherein said axial slots have an axial length which is larger than the axial length of said fins.

21. (new): The adjustable-length pole as recited in claim 20, wherein said axial slots extend virtually over an entire axial length of said radially spreadable element.

22. (new): The adjustable-length pole as recited in claim 16, wherein said axial slots have an axial length which is larger than the axial length of said fins.

23. (new): The adjustable-length pole as recited in claim 22, wherein said axial slots extend virtually over an entire axial length of said radially spreadable element.